

**BALTIMORE CITY DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING
URBAN DESIGN AND ARCHITECTURE REVIEW PANEL
MEETING MINUTES**

Date: June 27, 2013

Meeting No.: 168

Project: Mary Harvin Transformation Center

Phase: Schematic

Location: 1609 N. Chester St.

PRESENTATION:

Development officer Andrew Cohen of The Woda Group, introduced the project as a mixed-use project that includes affordable Senior Housing including 57 units in 5 story building with a partial basement, plus a separate counseling center for the Mary Harvin Transformation Center CDC. Located in east Baltimore the community based organization that supports youth and families with the goal of assisting them in their quest to move towards quality living. The site is owned by the Southern Baptist Church, located across N. Chester Street. Architect George Holback of Benn Cho Holback presented the general design approach site plan, ground floor plan, and massing perspectives.

1. The site is bounded by:
 - a. N. Chester Street to the east
 - b. N. Castle Street to the west
 - c. Rear yards of rowhouses (facing E. Lanvale) to the north
 - d. E. Federal Street bounds the southern edge
 - e. A major utility line bifurcates the site in the east-west direction
 - f. An outparcel that includes a retail store at the corner of Federal St. and Chester St.
 - g. There is a significant grade differential of approximately 15 feet from the northeast corner to the southwest corner
2. The proposed site includes an "L"-shaped building that:
 - a. The "L" legs are parallel to the northern and western boundaries.
 - b. This creates a drop-off on the southeast side of the building
 - c. Services are housed in the basement/lower level facing N. Castle Street
 - d. Limited surface parking is provided on the southeast corner of the site.
 - e. There is a fenced garden for residents' use south of the utility line and fronting E. Federal Street. Fencing shall be pre-finished vertical
3. The building is expressed with a brick masonry base and vertical masonry pilasters, with a composite panel and window system between the pilasters. Proposed materials and colors for brick and three colors (terra cotta, light grey and neutral beige) four composite panels were reviewed.

COMMENTS FROM THE PANEL:

1. The general design for both site organization and vertical expression are acceptable.
2. Specific recommendations for additional study include:
 - a. Provide more substantial entries, such as masonry piers flanking the gates, to the garden at E. Federal Street and from the drop off.
 - b. Enhance the exterior entry to the Mary Harvin Transformation Center as to announce itself more.
 - c. Improve building elevation at basement level entry doors along N. Castle Street.
 - d. Investigate the removal of some parking/hardscape along the approach to the main entrance from N. Chester St. in favor of additional landscaping and trees for a more direct/pleasant pedestrian connection.
3. Provide more detailed elevations of each façade, with critical areas enlarged.

PANEL ACTION:

The Schematic Phase was approved with comments.

Attending:

Zebulin Culver, Malik Jordan, Kevin Bell – The Woda Group
George Holback, Samantha Polinik – Cho Benn Holback
Lynette Piney – Human + Rohde
Fred Thompson – Gower Thompson Inc
Kevin Litten - BBJ

UDARP Panel Members- Ms. Jones Allen, Messrs. Bowden, Burns and Haresign*

Anthony Cataldo, Christina Gaymon, Laurie Feinberg, Alex Hoffman, Tamara Woods – Dept. of Planning